

Message Text

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12

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 PA-03 PRS-01 USIA-12 RSR-01

/072 W

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R 070646 Z MAY 73

FM AMCONSUL BARCELONA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2376

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: ELAB, SP

SUBJECT: LABOR DIFFICULTIES AT SEAT

1. SEAT PLANT IN BARCELONA, REPUTEDLY FACTORY WITH LARGEST SINGLE CONCENTRATION OF WORKERS IN SPAIN (ALMOST 24,000), REMAINS CLOSED FOLLOWING LABOR DISTURBANCES APRIL 30. WORKERS REACTION MAY 7 WHEN THEY WILL BE PERMITTED RETURN TO WORK PROBLEMATIC.

2. IMMEDIATE CAUSE OF DIFFICULTY WAS INCREASED SOCIAL SECURITY WITHHOLDING (TO PROVIDE FOR HIGHER BENEFITS) FROM PAY DISTRIBUTED APRIL 27. INCREASED WITHHOLDING APPLIED ACROSS BOARD IN SPAIN BUT IN THIS CASE MANAGEMENT HAD MADE NO EFFORT TO NOTIFY WORKERS IN ADVANCE OR PROVIDE EXPLANATION. APPROACH TOMANAGEMENT BY GROUP OF WORKERS REPULSED WITH STATEMENT THEY SHOULS SUBMIT ANY CLAIM THROUGH ESTABLISHED CHANNELS. IN RESPONSE WORKERS DELEGATES RETURNED TO PLANT AND BEGAN AGITATE FOR STRIKE; WORK CAME TO HALT IN SEVERAL SECTIONS OF PLANT AND SLOW- DOWN IN OTHERS.

3. ON APRIL 30 SOME 3,000 POLICE, PRINCIPALLY POLICIA ARMADA WITH FULL RIOT CONTROL PARAPHERNALIA TOOK POSITIONS IN FRONT OF AND AROUND FACTORY. AS THINGS WARMED UP AND POLICE ABOUT CHARGE WORKERS, MANAGEMENT PLED FOR TIME VACATE PLANT WHICH SUCCESSFUL.

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4. INDIVIDUAL LETTERS STATING PLANT WILL BE OPEN MAY 7 HAVE GONE OUT TO MOST WORKERS BUT A SMALL NUMBER WILL BE TOLD NOT TO COME BACK. WORKERS REACTION UNCERTAIN.

5. MANAGEMENT BELIEVES GREAT MAJORITY EMPLOYEES ACCEPT INCREASED SOCIAL SECURITY CONTRIBUTIONS BUT STATE COMMUNIST PARTY WELL ORGANIZED AND EXERCISES STRICT DISCIPLINE IN PLANT. ACCORDING MANAGEMENT, CP MEMBERS IN PLANT ARE " YOUNG ACTIVISTS AND CONVINCED IDEALISTS" AND MAY BE SEEKING " VICTIMS". COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP REPORTEDLY ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS TO INITIATE LABOR UNREST AT SEAT BECAUSE SEAT PLANT HERE EMPLOYS LARGEST SINGLE LABOR FORCE IN SPAIN; NUMBER OF AUXILIARY INDUSTRIES WITH LARGE NUMBER EMPLOYEES MIGHT FOLLOW SEAT LEAD; AND LARGE LABOR FORCES IN SURROUNDING INDUSTRIAL AREA MIGHT ALSO JUMP ON BAND WAGON.

6. IF FURTHER DISTURBANCES OCCUR SITUATION COULD BE COMPLICATED BY PRESENT MOOD OF POLICE FOLLOWING DEATH MAY 1 OF ONE THEIR NUMBERS IN MADRID AT HANDS DEMONSTRATORS.
ZIMMERMANN

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*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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